

## **MINUTES**

Mayor's Advisory Committee—Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan  
Eugene Public Library – Bascom/Tykeson Room  
100 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue

December 3, 2003  
7 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Nancy Nathanson, Chair; Steve Johnson, Cynthia Girling, Linda Swisher, Dan Arkin, Art Farley, Corey Dingman, Merle Bottge, Dale Berg, Terry Leary, Avishai Schermerhorn, Tim Whitley, members; Tim Patrick, Library, Recreation, and Cultural Services; Andrea Riner, Carrie Peterson, Sarah Medary, Mark Snyder, Parks and Open Space Division; T. Ferry Drucks, Lloyd Helikson, Churchill Area Neighbors; Terry Froemm, Harlow Neighbors; Sally McIntyre, Misty Fisher, MIG, Inc.

### **I. WELCOME**

Ms. Nathanson convened the meeting and asked those present to introduce themselves.

### **II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Nathanson invited members of the public to speak.

**Lloyd Helikson**, Churchill Area Neighbors, said that the Churchill Neighbors were watching the committee's progress closely and were very excited about the committee's work. He added that the Churchill Area Neighbors were planning to meet and develop a plan for parks in their area to assist the committee with its work.

In response to a request from Ms. Nathanson, Mr. Helikson described the Churchill area as being bounded by 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Chambers Street. He said that it was a large area that encompassed a large portion of the ridgeline area.

Mr. Berg said that it was very nice to come to the downtown and be able to meet in a public room in the library. He said that he hoped that other meetings would be held at this location.

### **III. EUGENE RAILYARDS**

Ms. Swisher distributed copies of pictures of the Union Pacific's Eugene Yards. The pictures included an air photo, typical scenes, and some before-and-after picture of parts of the yards. She also noted that six big posters of the yards were on display at the meeting. Ms. Swisher asked the committee to consider inviting Liska Clemence-Chan, a University of Oregon landscape architecture faculty member, and Michael Waldorf, president of the Trainsong Neighbors, to attend a meeting and talk about the future plans for the Eugene railyards. She said that the purpose of the presentation would be to give members

insights into why the railyard land and history were valuable cultural assets to Eugene, to inform people as to the history and conditions of the railyards, and to encourage discussion about what the railyards could be in the future. She said that the presentation would last about 30 minutes.

Ms. Nathanson suggested that Ms. Swisher find out when and where Ms. Clemence-Chan would be making a presentation on the railyards in order to inform the committee members so that they could attend. She said that the committee was no longer in the information-gathering phase of its work but was beginning to enter into the decision-making phase. She noted that there were many organizations or advocates who would want to make presentations to the committee and that there was not time to hear from them all at a committee meeting. She added that she wanted to make sure that the Trainsong Neighbors were included in one of the focus groups. Ms. McIntyre suggested making Ms. Clemence-Chan's PowerPoint presentation available in the library. Mr. Johnson also suggested putting it on the Web. Ms. McIntyre said that she would contact Ms. Clemence-Chan and make sure that she received information about committee meetings and proceedings.

Ms. Girling said that she thought that it was important to find a way to hear from interested groups, such as the Trainsong Neighbors, the Jefferson Area Neighbors, and the Churchill Area Neighbors, all of whom had expressed interest in affecting the process. She said that if the committee did not hear from the groups which were interested it would not be looking at a full range of options and opportunities. She suggested that perhaps groups could be invited to make presentations at a dedicated meeting. She stressed the importance of the committee being educated before making decisions.

Ms. McIntyre said that it was her job as consultant to research public input and to bring ideas forward from this research to the committee.

In response to a question from Mr. Arkin, Ms. Riner explained that staff had contacted the neighborhood groups and dozens of other organizations to inform them of the process and to invite them to participate. She said that this level of outreach would be done again when there was a plan framework on which to comment. Ms. McIntyre said that 44 presentations had been made and that 1,000 persons had attended. Mr. Arkin said that it seemed that some people who were just now realizing that the committee was at the decision-making phase still wanted to be able to give input.

Ms. Riner said that the committee would be deciding on a basic framework with overreaching goals and that this framework would then be taken to the neighborhoods for input on the details of the plan.

In response to a question from Mr. Arkin, Ms. McIntyre said that the primary goal was to develop a quality plan. Ms. Nathanson cautioned that a timeline for the process would depend on members' patience and also the City Council's urgency for a plan.

Mr. Arkin supported the idea of finding alternative ways for members to get information and input from interested groups. Mr. Berg repeated the suggestion that the committee invite groups to a "show-and-tell" meeting at which they could display their ideas. Ms. Nathanson said that it really depended on what the committee members were willing to absorb.

Ms. Bottge pointed out that while there may not be a specific timeline for the process, other work was waiting for this particular process to be completed. She said that, for example, the Public Works Rates Advisory Committee, which was studying systems development charges, was waiting for this

committee's work in order to update the SDC for parks.

Ms. Swisher supported the idea of a meeting at which neighborhood groups would be present so that she would have the opportunity to interact with them. She also liked the idea of having information on the Web.

Ms. Riner said that she thought that it would be helpful to have some substance or products to which the community could respond. She noted that the committee would have that soon.

Ms. Nathanson said that she was hearing two ideas: 1) that people needed to respond to a product, and 2) that the public needed to be able to influence the process to create a product.

Mr. Farley said that perhaps the committee should continue with its work with the idea that the neighborhood groups would be given a chance to contribute during the next phase. He said that would give the neighborhood groups two or three months to develop plans or suggestions. Ms. McIntyre referred members to the Planning Framework chart, which had been provided to each member. She said that there were definitely places within the framework to include opportunities for public input.

Ms. Girling cited the process used to develop the Rivers to Ridges Vision Plan as being a very successful one. She said that representative from different interested agencies were invited to participate and were formed into teams with very specific tasks. She said that the teams did the work and then reported back. She said that this process would allow the committee to make progress while also allowing the committee to be truly visionary.

Ms. Riner acknowledged that the task of the committee was a huge undertaking. She said that she thought that it was possible for the committee to begin to develop value statements and to be truly visionary in creating some tools for interested groups to critique. She agreed with Ms. McIntyre that opportunities existed within the planning framework for input from interested groups.

Ms. Riner distributed copies of a proposed meeting schedule for the next seven months.

#### **IV. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS UPDATE**

Ms. McIntyre said that there was a large scale public involvement process planned for the next stage of the process. She said that a neighborhood charrette could be included in the plans.

Ms. McIntyre distributed copies of the **Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan Draft Park and Natural Area Findings November 2003**. She briefly reviewed the document which included the following information:

- An outline of the park and natural area analysis report
- Definitions for park types, natural areas and trails
- Preliminary standards analysis tables for park types, including standards for comparable cities and districts and an analysis of park acreage distribution by planning area
- Preliminary standards analysis tables for outdoor recreation amenities, trails, and facilities
- A brief summary of major public involvement findings

- A description of mapping products that will support the park and natural area analysis

Ms. McIntyre reviewed the materials in Appendix A:

- Table 1. Park and Natural Area Classifications and Definitions
- Table 2. Trail Classifications and Definitions
- Table 3. Accessible Trail Classifications and Definitions

In response to comments and questions from Mr. Arkin, Ms. McIntyre said that accessibility was a really critical issue that the committee would be considering. He pointed out that often information was not available as to how far trails were accessible, or to specific conditions of trails.

- Table 4. Park and Natural Area Standards and Anticipated Need
- Table 5. Park Acreage Distribution by Planning Area

Ms. Nathanson asked that the neighborhoods in each Planning Area be listed. Mr. Arkin suggested using overlay maps to indicate that information. Ms. McIntyre said that the staff would clarify that and make that information available.

- Table 6. Outdoor Recreation Amenities, Trails and Facility Standards & Anticipated Need

Ms. McIntyre reviewed the maps that were included in Appendix B.

In response to a question from Mr. Whitley, Ms. Riner said that the maps did include the Westmoreland, Santa Clara, and Willakenzie schools' closures.

Ms. Girling asked when the staff would want input from the committee on the draft document. Ms. McIntyre said that comments on a draft were scheduled for February 2004.

Ms. Nathanson commented about the way the information was organized in the Draft Park and Natural Area Findings. She said, for example, that the information in Item III Assessment of Need for Recreation Amenities and Facilities was fine for purposes of statistics or lists, but that it would not necessarily assist in creating a vision statement. She said that she had been thinking in terms of who the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan should serve, who it would want to serve, or who it would want to attract. She also said that perhaps the classifications could be organized differently. She gave the examples of individual activities versus group activities, competitive sports versus non-competitive sports, passive recreation versus active recreation. She said that she had expected the findings to more sufficiently answer the questions: Who was the City serving and why?

Ms. McIntyre said that the demographics and other trends could be part of the draft. She added that it was important to remember that each neighborhood would want a variety of activities. She said that there were a number of ways to provide the information.

Mr. Whitley said that the findings were a list of the types of services rendered and that he thought that it was important to decide what the City should be doing with certain facilities such as the swimming pool and with staff time. Ms. McIntyre said that this sounded like program recommendations. Ms. Riner said that she thought that the information could be synthesized and then pulled back together in the form of

recommendations.

Mr. Schermerhorn said that he would like information about where things, such as the community gardens, were located.

Mr. Arkin said that in looking through the information, he had begun writing down different ideas of ways to offer recreation for many ages, types, abilities, etc. of people. He said that he was wondering how many different creative ways there were to offer recreational opportunities to people. He suggested looking at what other communities were doing and then giving it a uniquely “Eugene spin.”

Ms. Bottge pointed out that the committee’s work was about parks, recreation, and open space and was not just about parks and their amenities. She said that it was important to be clear about that before the core values were developed. She wondered if the mission was to serve all the people, animals, and ecology of the Eugene area or to just provide facilities. Ms. Bottge also thought that the committee needed to decide if it wanted to refer to centers as senior centers, adult centers, community centers, etc. Ms. McIntyre noted that the trend was not to develop senior centers any more, but to refer to them as community centers.

Ms. Riner reminded the committee members that this was merely one report and that the committee had looked at a recreation study at a previous meeting.

Mr. Farley said that the committee needed to identify its core values and mission first and then decide what it would take in this community to get those things done. Ms. McIntyre agreed, and added that the technical analysis had to be done to see where the City was now in order to identify where it would go in the future. Ms. Riner said that staff would develop some draft standards. Ms. McIntyre said that the standards would be used as a measure after the plan was formulated. Ms. Girling said that while she understood that staff and consultants needed to make progress and keep moving, she was concerned about jumping ahead on writing the standards before hearing suggestions about visions and goals from the committee. She was concerned about getting too deeply into the process before discussing core values and visions. Ms. McIntyre said that the process would remain open for changes until the final plan was adopted.

Mr. Arkin pointed out that there was sensitivity to trying to merge seniors and the disability community and that it was important to think about what centers were called.

Mr. Johnson said that most standards were averages and that standards had to be driven by values. He said that many different things should be considered when deciding if a park met “standards.” He said that he thought that standards would be the least important part of the process. Ms. McIntyre said that some communities did choose to bypass standards; however, she noted that this would create problems for communities with SDCs.

Ms. Riner called for a process check and asked if people wanted to continue the discussion or move to the next agenda item. Ms. McIntyre thought that it would be useful to continue the discussion.

Ms. Nathanson said that she did not understand how to work with items such as the one that appeared in the fourth column of Chart 1, proposed average size for new parks: minimum 5 acres. She and Mr. Johnson agreed that perhaps removing the word “average” would make it clearer.

In response to a question from Mr. Berg, Ms. McIntyre said that typically a comprehensive plan would be updated every five years. Mr. Berg said that setting percentages for pools, etc. would make things difficult for the staff because things changed so frequently. He used the example of the increase in the popularity of snowboarding instead of skiing. Ms. Riner pointed out that the comprehensive plan would be a tool for the planning staff to use daily. She added that it was helpful to have benchmarks to guide the way and to support the staff. Ms. Bottge noted that SDCs were based on certain standards.

Ms. McIntyre reminded the committee that the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Analysis was just one way of looking at things.

In response to a request from Mr. Shemerhorn, Ms. Riner said that the staff would provide a more complete park inventory.

## **V. PRELIMINARY STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK**

Ms. McIntyre referred members to their copy of the Planning Framework. She briefly described and explained the planning framework. She said that the framework began with the committee deciding on its Core Values, or the values on which all Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) services would be based. She also distributed copies of some of the preliminary values and goals that the committee had already discussed. The example core values were:

- |                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| ➤ Sustainable        | Resourceful   |
| ➤ Accessible         | Committed     |
| ➤ Visionary          | Positive      |
| ➤ Creative           | Flexible      |
| ➤ Community-based    | Collaborative |
| ➤ Responsive         | Timeless      |
| ➤ Accountable        | Inclusive     |
| ➤ Ecologically-based | Visible       |
| ➤ Efficient          | Happiness     |
| ➤ Safety             | Variety       |
| ➤ Balance            |               |

Ms. McIntyre continued to review the planning framework, saying that the vision would be a one sentence description of where the City would be when all of the work on PROS was completed. She said that the mission would be what the City would do to meet its vision. The goals would be the outcomes or benefits and the strategies would be action statement that described how the vision, mission, and goals would be achieved.

Ms. Nathanson suggested that the committee members examine the sample list of core values and goals to see if they agree with or understand the values. Ms. McIntyre suggested that members also think about a vision for how they would “paint success.”

Ms. Nathanson commented that some aspects of living in Eugene did not fall under PROS. She said that she thought of Eugene as a beautiful city, and that amenities that added to its restfulness, joy, and beauty,

such as benches or urban forests, were important. She wondered where those amenities fit into the plan. Ms. McIntyre said that these could be incorporated into the strategies. Ms. Riner encouraged committee members to think of core values and vision in terms of the whole community and not just in terms of PROS.

Mr. Berg asked if there was a place for community input in the planning framework. Ms. McIntyre said that a draft plan would be developed and taken to the community for feedback. She said that she had heard committee members express the need to provide opportunities for people to give feedback before and after a draft had been developed. Ms. Bottge said that her experience was that people would give feedback when there was a product.

Mr. Farley commented that he thought that the discussion had been important before moving on to the next phase. He suggested that if the neighborhood groups were going to be invited to a meeting, that they be given some advanced notice. Mr. Arkin said that it would be important to put out a unified message to all of the groups.

## **VI. NEXT STEPS/CLOSE**

Ms. Peterson reported that there would be a meeting to view the concept designs for the Riverplay Playground on December 9 at the Hilyard Center. She said that the focus would be on accessibility. She said that there would be a concept plan unveiling on December 18 at 11 a.m. at the Hult Center.

Ms. Riner announced that the new web site would be launched in December.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Elise Self)

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